



PRESS RELEASE

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MAYOR BALLARD, OHIO STREET NEIGHBORS AND BUSINESSES CELEBRATE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY COMPONENTS OF REBUILDINDY PROJECT

INDIANAPOLIS – Porous concrete and rain gardens are just some of the environmentally friendly components included in the RebuildIndy project on Ohio Street detailed today by Mayor Greg Ballard at a community event at The Nature Conservancy. The project is one of several infrastructure improvements underway across Marion County as part of the City's recent \$55 million infrastructure investment planned for 2010. This is in addition to the \$88 million the City has invested in infrastructure in 2010 already.

"The Ohio Street project is the first of many RebuildIndy projects that will feature environmentally friendly components and emphasizes the priority of my administration on creating a sustainable future for Indianapolis," said Mayor Ballard. "Through the Office of Sustainability and the RebuildIndy program, I am committed to making Indianapolis one of the most sustainable cities in the Midwest."

Construction underway on Ohio Street includes street resurfacing from West Street to College Avenue and replacement of deteriorated sidewalks and curbs using environmentally friendly porous concrete and installing rain gardens to improve drainage in the area. Ohio Street, particularly from Park Avenue to College Avenue, has suffered continued pavement degradation from poor drainage and subsequent freeze-thaw on the surface. The soil types on the project site were ideal for infiltration, creating a situation well suited for the use of porous concrete sidewalks. This project is the first use by the Department of Public Works (DPW) of porous concrete for sidewalks and monolithic curbs and gutters.

"This project is significant because it allows DPW the opportunity to utilize sustainable infrastructure on multiple levels," said David Sherman, DPW director. "We're analyzing everything from the interaction of soil types, surface materials, pollutant sources and infiltration rates to broad policy implications on initial cost, maintenance and life cycle. With input from community development corporations and neighborhood groups, we've been able to get a better understanding of what will be genuinely sustainable for the long term."

The Ohio Street project has relied on partnerships within the neighborhood, including the Cole Noble District Neighborhood Association, Indianapolis Downtown Inc., and local business owners such as The Nature Conservancy, The Buchanan Group and Easley Winery.

“Our neighborhood has been plagued by crumbling sidewalks, deteriorating streets and drainage concerns for decades now,” said Bruce Buchanan, president of the Cole-Noble District Neighborhood Association. “We’re excited about the infrastructure improvements that we’ve seen in our area and the commitment to improve quality of life that Mayor Ballard shares with our association.”

The Ohio Street project will remove an estimated 1.3 million gallons of storm water from the combined sewer system annually, which represents more than 90 percent of the annual rainfall volume for the Ohio Street watershed area.

“This project illustrates the spirit and vision of The Nature Conservancy,” said Mary McConnell, state director for The Nature Conservancy. “When we decided to invest in this location and in sustainable elements for our building, we hoped it would inspire sustainable practices throughout the area. We’re glad to see that it has.”

Other sustainable DPW projects under way throughout the county now include:

- Crooked Creek Area Sewer Improvements – DPW will complete construction on a project that will add capacity to infrastructure and eliminate approximately 2,000 septic systems by providing residents with access to the City’s sanitary sewer system. The project also includes construction of porous pavement parking lots and four rain gardens
- Highland Creek at Troy and Bluff Storm Water Diversion Project – DPW will construct wetlands and divert 80 percent of flood waters from impacted neighborhood streets
- Springwood Trail Area Channel Improvements – DPW will use natural materials to strengthen channel banks, install erosion control blankets and encourage natural plant growth

Mayor Ballard announced RebuildIndy’s initial \$55 million investment in infrastructure projects on Sept. 9, kicking off a variety of infrastructure improvement projects in the county. These projects are all scheduled to start construction in late 2010 or early 2011. The entire \$55 million has already been released for bid and more than \$35 million in infrastructure improvement projects have already been awarded to contractors. Work is underway across the community, including street resurfacing on Guion Road between 38th Street and 56th Street, 10th Street from I-465 to Girls School Road and walkability and accessibility improvements along Michigan Road.

For more information about the RebuildIndy program, visit www.indy.gov/RebuildIndy. To request a RebuildIndy project in your area, call the Mayor’s Action Center at (317) 327-4MAC (4622).

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